



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

3612

#9

In re Application of:

DITCH, et al.

Serial No.: 09/238,510

Filing Date: January 27, 1999

For: Tie Down For Wheelchairs

Art Unit: 3612

Examiner: Gordon

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MAY 16 2001

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Honorable Director of the Patent  
and Trademark Office  
Washington, DC 20231

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05/22/2001 D1088 00000001 501088 09238510

Sir:

Applicants in the above-captioned application hereby respectfully request the Director to suspend action in this application for a further period of six months for the following reasons. The first Petition to Suspend Action was filed on November 15, 2000, and was granted for a period of six months. No Office Action is outstanding.

The parent patent, USP 5,888,038, is the subject of two actions presently pending in the United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan, Southern Division. These actions are *American Seating Company v. Transportation Seating, Inc.*, Case 1:00 CV 322 and *American Seating Company v. Freedman Seating Company and Kinedyne Corporation*, Case 1:00 CV 417. In both of these actions, defendants have alleged prior invention by Richard Craft of Transportation Seating, Inc. and derivation by one or more of the inventors of the instant application. While American Seating Company, the assignee of the instant application has denied these allegations, the District Court actions are in such a posture that these issues have yet to be fully developed or resolved.

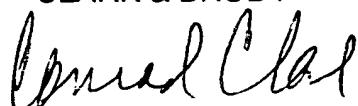
Discovery is presently ongoing in the first action and is not scheduled to close until July 15, 2001. The second case is in settlement negotiations.

It is submitted that it would not be appropriate to proceed with the instant application until these issues are fully developed or resolved because their outcomes will affect patentability of the claims herein. Accordingly, suspension of the prosecution of the instant application is appropriate.

Please charge any fee due and credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-1088.

Respectfully submitted,

CLARK & BRODY



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